

CAPS Version 2

What's New and Different

April 2015

Oversight and guidance of the Western States' Crucial Habitat Assessment Tools (CHATs) has changed. The Western Governors' Association (WGA) was primarily responsible for coordinating state efforts in developing a consistent approach for the west-wide and state CHATs. This responsibility has transitioned to the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA).

Basic Map Application Functionality

- Map extent goes beyond Montana's borders.
- More basemap options: Imagery Hybrid, Ownership, Ownership Hybrid, National Geographic, World Topo, USA Topo have been added.
- Tools have been streamlined and re-arranged for ease of use.
- Print tools are now available.
- Drawing tools have been improved.
- Layers and Legends Tabs: The table of contents now includes a layers tab and an additional legend tab displaying the symbology for layers that are turned on. This tab replaces the "floating" legend which makes it easier to read.
- Identify: Identify tasks have been simplified. To retrieve data for layers, simply turn on any desired layers and click in the map. A "Click Results" window will open with identification information for all layers that are turned on. In addition, general information is provided about the clicked location.
- Layer Descriptions and Options: Information about layers can be obtained by clicking on the dropdown arrow located at the end of the layer name in the table of contents. In addition, visualization options for zooming, swiping, and transparency can be changed at the layer level.

Data Layers

- Data scale/representation: The original CAPS used one square mile public land survey sections for terrestrial data representation. In an effort to be consistent with the regional CHAT data, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has adopted the use of one square mile hexagons for CHAT data layers.
- A new Crucial Areas Habitat Rank layer: This Crucial Areas "Roll up" layer is the same layer as available on the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies CHAT site. This layer represents a relative rank as an aggregated measure of crucial habitat for species of interest to the western states' fish and wildlife management agencies. Crucial habitat describes places that are expected to contain the resources necessary for continued health of fish and wildlife populations or important ecological systems expected to provide high value for a diversity of fish and wildlife.
- Tier 1 layers: These layers are the primary contributions to the Crucial Areas Habitat Rank. While several of these layers were available in the original CAPS, they are presented as Tier 1 data layers to maintain consistency with the Western States' approach. The Tier 1 layers are:
 - Habitat for Species of Concern

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- Native and Unfragmented Habitat
 - Large Natural Areas
 - Landscape Connectivity
- Wetland and Riparian Areas
- Species of Economic and Recreational Importance
- Terrestrial Conservation Species has changed: This layer has been replaced by the Habitat for Species of Concern layer. The new layer presents a new approach to ensure greater consistency across the Western states, and emphasizes the use of observation data. In addition, the cumulative approach was replaced with a categorical technique that prioritized Species of Concern state, federal and global rankings. This approach was considered an improvement over the broader use of modeled distribution data in the original layer.
- Terrestrial Species Richness has been removed: In seeking to present as accurate information as possible, the use of species habitat associations, representing cumulative species richness, was not included in the development of any Tier 1 datasets.
- Crucial Areas Supporting Data renamed: Those layers included in the CAPS supporting data categories that are not included as Tier 1 data layers were added to the “Montana Pilot Data – Non-Tier 1” category. This includes many of the aquatic and habitat layers.
- State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) layers are included in the mapping system: Note these data layers did not contribute to the Crucial Areas Habitat Rank or Tier 1 datasets.

Development & Infrastructure Layers

- Added 2030 projected housing densities.
- Removed proposed and alternative pipeline layers for completed or abandoned projects.
- Added several Montana Dept of Transportation layers.

Reference and Landscape Layers

- Renamed from “Boundaries and Other Layers”.
- Designated areas has been removed and replaced with Protected Areas layers from the USGS GAP Analysis Program's Protected Areas Database (PAD-US).